GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:237
ANSWERED ON:29.08.2007
MALNOURISHED CHILDREN
Reddy Shri Magunta Sreenivasulu;Subbarayan Shri K.

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of malnourished children in the country is twice the number of malnourished children in the Sub-Saharan Africa;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the percentage of malnourished children in the country; and

(c) the concrete measures taken by the Government to eradicate nutritional deficiency in the children?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a)to(c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 237 FOR 29TH AUGUST, 2007

According to National Family Health Survey (NFHS-III), 2005-06, 46% children under three years of age are underweight and 38% are stunted in our country.As per the UNICEF Report entitled `The State of the World`s Children 2007`, 28% children underfive are underweight and 37% are stunted in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Malnutrition/under-nutrition is a multi-faceted problem. The important determinants are inadequate food, levels of poverty, female illiteracy, high rate of population growth, repeated pregnancies, environmental, sanitation, hygiene and other such conditions.The nutritional issues are being addressed by several ministries through several programs that are administered by the Government. Some of the targeted interventions being made in this regard are emphasis on appropriate food for infants and young child feeding, specific programs for prevention and control of micronutrient deficiencies, supplementary nutrition through Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS), national program of nutritional support to primary education (Mid-day Meal Program).Government is also trying to address the problem of mal-nutrition through the targeted public distribution system (PDS) by making essential food items available at subsidized costs and also through several income generating schemes to improve the purchasing power.